

Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

Meeting Notes for July 19, 2000

Agenda Items

- LRRP Business
- Review Design Guidelines for Royal Brougham & Lander Street
- Review Draft Letter to ST Board re: STart Program

Commissioners Present

Carolyn Law
Jay Lazerwitz
Paul Tomita

Staff Present

Debora Ashland, Sound Transit
Marty Curry, Planning Commission
Lisa Merz, CityDesign
Cheryl Sizov, CityDesign

Cheryl Sizov chaired the meeting in Jon Layzer's absence. Since there were no formal presentations scheduled, the meeting focused on LRRP business items after introductions were made.

Cheryl began with an update on the MLK Task Force and the progress made to date in looking comprehensively at the whole corridor. The first day of a three-day community workshop was held on Tuesday, July 18th; LRRP members were encouraged to attend the other public session scheduled for Thursday, July 20th. Owen Lang of Sasaki Associates has been hired by Sound Transit as a consultant for the corridor. He has been involved in extensive stakeholder interviews and has begun conceptualizing ideas regarding the corridor. He will present a summary of findings Thursday, July 20th, at Mt Baker Community Center, 6:30 to 9:00 pm.

Without a quorum, approval of the meeting notes from June 7th and June 21st had to be postponed. The schedule for future meetings was discussed. Cheryl suggested pairing up review of street improvement proposals with appropriate station presentations so that the Panel could see the overall concept for the area. An extra meeting was also scheduled for September to ensure that the Panel can maintain current target dates set by Sound Transit.

Mary Jo Porter reported that the Sound Transit Board will make a decision Thursday, July 27th regarding the alignment for the Roosevelt/Northgate extension to the system. Also to be determined is the staging area for those stations. The City Council has endorsed the 12th Ave location. There was discussion about whether LRRP should write a letter to the Board stating an opinion on the alignment. Jay indicated he supports the 12th Avenue tunnel alignment. Marty mentioned that although that alignment seems to work well for the local community, it does raise issues about equity with Southeast Seattle where some community members advocated long and hard for a tunnel. The Panel asked Cheryl to query LRRP members via e-mail about whether to write a letter or not.

Review of Design Guidelines

Cheryl Sizov reminded Panel members of the purpose and schedule for the Seattle Design Guidelines for Link Light Rail, noting that so far she had received comments from a couple of Panel members and from an SPO staff person, Tom Hauger, regarding the draft Design Guidelines for the Royal Brougham and Lander stations. Barbara Gray was in attendance speaking to Tom's concerns since he was unable to attend.

Discussion

Barbara said Tom is concerned about the language that calls for the stations to “read from a distance”—stating that stations which are visible from I-5 or Highway 99 may inadvertently encourage hide and ride parking activity. There was discussion about clarifying that language, as well as discussion about the difference between attracting pedestrians and merely accommodating them. Everyone stressed the importance of safe pedestrian travel through the area. The interpretation here is that it needs to be pedestrian friendly while still reinforcing and ensuring the industrial usage of the area. Bike trail user needs must also be met, as well as connections in general between bus, bike, and rail. Trees and other landscaping and freight mobility can co-exist in a working industrial area, although all were in agreement that industrial uses and activities should not be hidden or screened. Overall, the document received positive comments and people thought it was very well written. Cheryl will make a few changes and e-mail the revised document to Panel members. She was also urged to contact Mike Perringer of the SoDo business association to get his input.

Review Draft Letter to ST Board re: SStart Program

Following the Public Art presentations on May 3rd, May 17th, and June 21st, the panel drafted a letter regarding the Sound Transit Public Art program. Carol Valenta from SStart expressed appreciation for the support given in the letter, but questioned whether this is the best time to send a letter to the Board. She noted that the Public Art Program has shifted from station allocation to segment allocation, and already presented a revised budget allocation document to the Board and received its approval. She suggested that a letter from LRRP might be seen by the Board as a “red flag” that something is wrong. Panel members still questioned the flexibility of the proposed allocation of funds. Carol feels there is still flexibility at this point but also communicated that specific allocations must begin at some level. The Panel discussed her concern and agreed that the intent at this point is to support the art program not raise concerns.

Recommendation

Panel members agreed that the Art Program had addressed their concerns and that it may be inappropriate to send the letter at this point. It was decided that a one page letter supporting the current direction was appropriate. The Panel would like the Board to know that they support the SStart Program.

Since the contents of the draft letter clearly state LRRP's goals and concerns regarding the Art Program, members and staff felt that this document could be utilized in other ways, such as in the Schematic Design report. Cheryl was asked to revise the letter and circulate to the rest of the Panel for review.

The meeting adjourned early at 5:10 pm.